Mr. Edward Kemp, Acquisitions Librarian
The Library
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Rt. 12, Frederick, Md. 21701
1/15/77

Dear Mr. Kemp,

Your letter of January 11 addresses what is important to me, my records, which is a broader descriptions than yours. Except under circumstances I wish I could anticipate but do not I have already made the arrangements about which you write. However, for your records, I explain it, in the order of your letter.

First I should explain that I withdrew from one such arrangement, with the late Arthur Price for an achive he was establishing at Yale, for a number of reasons that had nothing to do with Yale. One of these is what led me to favor Wisconsin when I was approached some years ago by the Wisconsin Historical Society. It is the unique personal andprofessional qualifications of Professor David Wrone of the history faculty at Stevens Point. Mr. Wrone and his family have since become cherished personal friends. And I must say that having met the chancellor and in an hour having been enormously impressed by him there is no likelihood of my wanting to make any chance. There is one circumstance only under which I would and this is understood between us: support for my work in my lifetime.

From the outset Wisconsin has had a fine attitude. They are quite willing to cooperate with a fine, small local women's college, Hood, where they was interest under the previous president and is currently some renewed interest among the history/political science faculty. Whether or not anything will come of this I do not know. I would like to be able to work with young scholars because they can be of help to me and becauseI believe that I can be of help to them. None of the Washington area universities has expressed any interest although a number of students have. I have taken no initiatives.

My records are extensive. I doubt you can visualize their extent from my books. They represent an asset to me but one I would use as an asset only to enable my work to be more effecient and to be able to complete more of it.

Throughout all of the period represented by this work I have been without regular income or subsidy. Except for the assistance my wife is able to provide from time to time all that is done here I must do myself, from typing and filing upward in difficulty. Thus I hope you will pardon the errors in my typing and my not taking time to read and correct. I will soon be 64. In 1975 I have acute thrombophlebitis in both legs and thighs with the damage extensive and permanent before I was hospitalized. While this has been less limiting than one would probably imagine - I still work a long day every day - it has made me aware of inexorable time. But no matter how long the day I am ineffecient. This, not the conditions of my personal life, explains my desire for support. If I were to get an advance on a book, for example, I would use it to hire a research assistant.

After I was first taken ill I asked two friends to act as my executors and see to the disposition of my records. One is Jim Lesar, who handles my current Freedom of Information cases and other legal need, the other Howard Roffman, who is in his last year of law school. Both were history majors. Each in his own way is a subject expert.

You refer to your graduate program. Were it not for the distance between us I am certain something of this sort would be possible now. My records probably include the largest private collection of once secret CIA and FBI files and I obtain more almost daily thanks to Jim Lesar, FOIA and the courts. One doctoral candidate is now engaged on a thesis based on a small but unprecedented part of some of these records. These materials, I believe, are exceptionally rich for such uses.

"Permanent preservation" is assured, I am confident under the conditions you offer. Even broader use that you suggest has commenced, although it is limited. Some of this is suitable for use in secondary schools and Wisconsin has begun that in conjunction with its communications school. Lesar, Roffman and I spent the week of November 8 at Stevens Point with two seminars daily and a more formal presentation each night. It is all video-

taped. While this is a rather primitive beginning because none of us regard this subject as a whodunit and all are seriously concerned about our basic institutions and their functioning I believe that what the university has can be used as it is and that the university intends use as soon as it is possible. During that week were there requests from other educators. All of the film I have used in lectures has been duplicated. At least some of Roffman's have been. The beginning of this deposit also includes copies of those records I could carry with me, unpublished and once secret FBI and CIA files I obtained under FOIA. A few on the King assassination as I now recall.

I do not take time for a description of my files on the King assassination but I assure you that they are already without precedent and they are growing at a rate of about a hundred pages of once-secret records a day.

How this is possible may interest you. Lesar does my legal work knowing I cannot pay him. While competing with the nuts and self-seekers who have ripped off the collegiate mind while dipping into the collegiate pocket is impossible I do from time to time make college appearances. I give Mr. Lesar each honorarium and the few contributions that I receive from time to time. He pays the xeroxing costs this way. Other costs can be difficult for me. The CIA has just demanded a $500 deposit on an estimated $1,000 search fee. Somehow we manage.

You are, of course, correct in saying "that private papers are often of a personal nature." I have attached no conditions as my records relate to me. My files do contain the personal records of others, from ordinary, every-day people to celebrities. To these I attach only the usual protections. I cannot attach any personal conditions relating to myself except as they also relate to others. To do so would be unscholarly. I have preserved every draft and each of the rather few errors. All my unpublished manuscripts, read and unread, are preserved. There is doctoral material in them and the relevant files.

The only problem I can forsee with privacy relates to my very large collection of tapes. These include some radio and TV appearances, mostly of others and some of my more dramatic personal confrontations. I believe their greater value lies in the interviews I have conducted over the years and relating to both assassinations. With the Ray family these also involve legal rights.

Here I am led to suggest that social scientists will find values in my work. I do not mean to suggest an importance to their sexual content, never part of my inquiries.

It is primarily because of your reference to graduate programs that I have responded as I have. I cannot speak for Wisconsin and I do not suggest that I do. I have imposed no conditions on use and I will not. This, in my belief, would be improper on my part. Unless there is meaningful support for my work I regard my files as ultimately their property and with the assent of Messrs. Lesar and Roffman at some later date entirely under their control. However, I do suggest that should any of this appear to be relevant in any graduate work it might be a good idea to write Professor Wrone.

It occurs to me that I should have explained that from the time I completed Frame-Up I have been James Earl Ray's investigator. Jim Lesar is his lawyer.

I do thank you for your letter. In the event your library does not have all my printed work I enclose a list. And again I apologize for my typing errors and the haste.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg